

safety should have nothing but strong support from all persons and all groups. A copy of one of our past programs for your information can be arranged while you are here by contacting Floyd B. Heimer, who is secretary of the Maryland State Firemen's Association. The costs of putting on the conference should be minimal, but I have always felt that of all the monies spent in education, that spent in the training and education for the fire service probably gives as great a direct return to the citizen-taxpayers as any.

This brings up another point of grave importance to you, as well as to every fireman in America. This is the tremendous changes that are occurring in the world daily, and the impact these are having on the education needs for fire officers. One of the values of this Memphis Conference is that it brings men to this rostrum who can share with you their specialized knowledge in technical areas that have become more complex and complicated because of progressive developments. A glance at the items listed on your program illustrates the scope of the Conference. You are urged to get as much educational help as possible here, and then to share your new knowledge with others when you return home.

On the occasion of my second visit to FDIC, I have become convinced there is much yet to be learned by service leaders. Although there will always be the necessity for basic training and instruction for firemen, there is an urgent need for top level education for command fire officers. This is a must. The day has come when every fire officer must be educated in tactical strategy, technical fire protection and administration. This learning opportunity for fire officers must be comprehensive and of a caliber not now generally available. My State is taking steps to develop such a program. Early this month a series of four staff and command schools for fire officers started under the Fire Service Extension Department of the University of Maryland. This follows the one held last year.

It is of interest to note that last year's staff and command school ended just as the severe fire weather of April started. There were more fires in Maryland in rainfree April last year than any month in our history. In one of these that occurred just as the staff and command course was completed, it was necessary for over 100 pumpers from five counties to converge on one incident. This came as a sort of surprise examination to the fire officers who were enrolled. I am proud to say that the logistical, tactical and administrative problems of such a major situation were very capably met. This might not have been the case had the fire occurred two months earlier.